

# ***Iowa Outdoors***

## **Iowa Department of Natural Resources**

### **www.iowadnr.com**

Editor: Mick Klemesrud, 515/281-8653  
[mick.klemesrud@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:mick.klemesrud@dnr.state.ia.us)

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**August 19, 2003**

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## **NON NATIVE FISH SPECIES FOUND IN IOWA INTERIOR STREAMS**

DES MOINES – The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has confirmed the presence of silver carp in the Des Moines River at Keosauqua and below the Ottumwa Dam. The presence of this non-native fish is not good news and has the potential to harm other more desirable native fish species, such as the paddlefish, young of the year game fish and other filter-feeding species, including mussels.

Silver carp is not the only new invader to Iowa rivers; bighead carp are also present. These two carp species, often used by commercial aquaculture operations in the southern United States to keep their catfish ponds clean, are loose in the Mississippi River and finding their way into Iowa's interior streams.

“The only thing stopping these fish (from moving further into Iowa and other Midwestern states) is the larger dams,” said Kim Bogenschutz, aquatic nuisance species coordinator for the Iowa DNR. These exotic species are also in the interior rivers of Illinois and Missouri.

Silver carp are prolific at reproduction and can be found in large numbers below dams. They are continuously silver in color, deep-bodied, have very small scales with eyes sitting low on their head, and tend to leap out of the water when in the area of a moving boat. They are also difficult to catch by net so they must be corralled.

Mark Flammang, DNR fisheries biologist at Lake Rathbun, said he collected the first samples of silver carp at the end of June from the Des Moines River at Keosauqua. Flammang has been working on the Des Moines River near Ottumwa recently and had a run in with these jumping fish.

“It was like giant popcorn,” he said. “Hundreds of these things in the air. You could hear them hitting the bottom of the boat. Everyone of these silver carp were 25 inches long.”

“Silver and bighead carp can get big and are difficult to control through natural predation,” Bogenschutz said.

Bighead carp are silver in color with black blotches on its back, deep-bodied with eyes low on the head and small scales. Bighead carp in excess of 50 pounds are common. This species was first found in Iowa in the Missouri River at Sergeant Bluff in 1988 and is spreading its range to interior streams.

Flammang has found multiple year classes of bigheads in the Chariton River below Lake Rathbun. On July 30, Randall Moore, of Prairie City, caught a 54-pound, 48-inch bighead carp in the Des Moines River below the spillway at Lake Red Rock. It is a new state record for the new category of bighead carp. Moore caught the fish using a crappie jig.

Iowa rivers have a delicate ecosystem already under stress from non-native species, like the common carp, and silt and pollutants from urban and agriculture runoff. In order to preserve the fragile ecosystem, the Iowa DNR has laws to help protect the water, including making it illegal for anyone to stock fish in state waters. The Iowa DNR works closely with the aquaculture industry in the state to regulate which fish species are allowed and which are not. Unfortunately, the commercial aquaculture operations in the states where these fish were released violated no state laws.

“These carp will undoubtedly have an impact on our rivers, but if they get into a lake, it would be devastating,” Flammang said. “These carp feed on plankton and the impact on the young of all species would be incredible. The young of all species rely on plankton. This definitely concerns me.”

Bogenschutz said there are some rules under development on the national level banning the importation of the black carp – a mussel eating species used to control snails in aquaculture ponds and currently not found in Iowa waters – and more information is being gathered on the presence of silver carp. “But when something happens accidental (and these fish are released), it’s hard to make a case,” she said.

She said preventing the transport of these species is always best and anglers can help reduce the chance these fish move from affected rivers to non-affected lakes or other streams.

“People who collect bait should use it in the same water where it was caught and not transfer the bait to other water bodies,” she said. “It is tough to identify species when the fish are that small.” She also said people who purchase bait should empty their bait containers in the trash and not in the water when they are done fishing.

“These fish are spreading and we are definitely concerned. I know it goes without saying, but don’t collect these fish and move them to another area,” Flammang said. “If an angler sees something in a place that they have not seen before, they should call their conservation officer or their local fish management biologist.”

**For more information, contact Bogenschutz at 515-432-2823.**

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### **Waterfowl Numbers Up**

## **IOWA HUNTING SEASON SHOULD BE DUCKY**

By Lowell Washburn

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

DES MOINES--When Iowa hunters take to the state's public wetlands this fall, they are likely to encounter more migrating ducks than they did one year ago.

According to DNR Waterfowl Biologist, Guy Zenner, all of the continent's 10 most commonly surveyed duck species showed an increase during this year's nesting season. For several species, the gains were dramatic.

The number of blue-winged teal increased by 31 percent over last year, while pintails jumped 43 percent. The number of shovelers increased by 56 percent and the breeding populations of green-winged teal, gadwalls, redhead, and canvasback ducks all showed gains of around 15 percent over 2002. The number of scaup and mallard ducks showed a more moderate increase of 6 percent over last year. The number of wigeon rose by 9 percent.

According to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the 2003 population of mallard, gadwall, teal, redhead, and canvasback ducks is now at or above the long term [1955-2003] average for those species.

"FOR IOWA WATERFOWL HUNTERS, any increase in duck numbers is welcome news," said Zenner. "But this year, duck numbers are up quite significantly from what was surveyed during the spring of 2002. Consequently, the outlook for this year's fall flight is very positive."

But this year's sudden increase in total duck numbers comes as no surprise, says Zenner. Given the greatly improved spring habitat conditions that greeted migrating ducks during April and May, it would have been hard for bird numbers not to increase.

Simply put, ducks need water to nest. An abundance of spring ponds generally means a surge in production. When drought conditions cause spring ponds to disappear, waterfowl populations decline.

During this year's spring habitat surveys, May pond counts increased by 145 percent across the principal nesting grounds of prairie Canada. Pond counts in the grasslands of North Dakota, South Dakota, and eastern Montana increased by more than 30 percent.

"It would have been very unusual to have pond numbers increase this dramatically and not have duck numbers follow that trend," said Zenner.

"Last winter was extremely dry across much of southern Canada. During April, those areas were hit with a combination of heavy snow storms and abundant rainfall. The ducks arrived and took full advantage of the improved habitat."

**BUT WILDLIFE BIOLOGISTS ARE QUICK TO CAUTION** hunters against placing too much emphasis on total duck numbers. That, they say, can be misleading.

"What waterfowl hunters living in places like Minnesota or Iowa need to keep in mind is that hunting success will depend much more on developing fall weather patterns and regional habitat [marsh] conditions than it will on the total number of ducks coming out of Canada," said Zenner.

"Right now, conditions are extremely dry across much of the state. In the marsh country of north central and northwest Iowa, persistent heat and a lack of rainfall have degraded wetlands significantly during the past month. We need substantial rainfall to raise wetland water levels and pull birds into Iowa during migration. Otherwise, migrants could just fly over or even bypass those areas this fall.

"However, it should also be noted that a couple of good cloud bursts could turn things around. With favorable moisture patterns, the whole picture could change completely within a few days -- we've seen that before. At this point, we'll just have to wait and see what the weather does.

"What I can say is that regardless of where a person plans to hunt this fall, some preseason scouting is definitely in order," said Zenner.

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## **IOWA HUNTING AND TRAPPING SEASONS SET FOR 2003 - 2004**

CHARITON – The Natural Resource Commission of the Department of Natural Resources approved Iowa's hunting seasons at its August commission meeting last Thursday.

**Youth Pheasant** – Oct. 18 – 19, daily bag 1, possession 2 – after the first day

**Iowa Pheasant** – Oct. 25 – Jan. 10, 2004, daily bag 3, possession 12

**Bobwhite Quail** – Oct. 25 – Jan. 31, 2004, daily bag 8, possession 16

**Gray Partridge** – Oct. 11 – Jan. 31, 2004, daily bag 8, possession 16

**Turkey (Gun)** – Oct. 13 – Dec. 5, one turkey per license

**Turkey (Bow Only)** – Oct. 1 – Dec. 5; and Dec. 22 – Jan. 10, 2004, one turkey per license

**Deer (Bow)** – Oct. 1 – Dec. 5; and Dec. 22 – Jan. 10, 2004, one deer per license

**Deer (Muzzleloader)** – (early, residents only) Oct. 11 – Oct. 19 or (late) Dec. 22 – Jan. 10, 2004, one deer per license

**Deer (Youth – 12 to 15, or Severely Disabled)** – Sept. 20 – Oct. 5, one deer per license

**Deer (Shotgun)** – (first) Dec. 6 – 10; or (second) Dec. 13 – 21, one deer per license

**Deer Special Late Season** – Jan. 11 – 19, 2004, one deer per license

**Ruffed Grouse** – Oct. 4 – Jan. 31, 2004, daily bag 3, possession 6

**Rabbit (Cottontail)** – Sept. 1 – Feb. 28, 2004, daily bag 10, possession 20

**Rabbit (Jack)** – Oct. 25 – Dec. 1, daily bag 2, possession 4

**Squirrel (Fox and Gray)** – Sept. 1 – Jan. 31, 2004, daily bag 6, possession 12

**Groundhog** – June 15 – Oct. 31, no bag or possession limit

**Crow** – Oct. 15 – Nov. 30; and Jan. 14, 2004 – March 31, 2004, no bag or possession limit

**Pigeon** – Oct. 1 – March 31, 2004, no bag or possession limit

**Coyote** – Continuous Open Season, no bag or possession limit

**Raccoon and Opossum** – Nov. 1 – Jan. 31, 2004, no bag or possession limit

**Fox (Red and Gray)** – Nov. 1 – Jan. 31, 2004, no bag or possession limit

### **Migratory Game Bird Seasons (North and South Zones)**

**Ducks, Mergansers and Coots** (excluding pintails and canvasbacks) – North Zone – Sept. 20 – 24 and Oct. 11 – Dec. 4; South Zone – Sept. 20 – 22 and Oct. 18 – Dec. 13

**Pintails** – North Zone – Sept. 20 – 24 and Oct. 11 – Nov. 4; South Zone – Sept. 20 – 22 and Oct. 18 – Nov. 13

**Canvasbacks** – North Zone – Oct. 18 – Nov. 16; South Zone – Oct. 25 – Nov. 23

**Canada Geese and Brant** – North Zone – Sept. 27 – Dec. 5; South Zone – Sept. 27 – Oct. 19 and Nov. 8 – Dec. 24

### **Migratory Game Bird Seasons (Statewide)**

**White-fronted Geese** – Sept. 27 – Dec. 21

**Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days** – Oct. 4 – 5

**Light Geese** (White and Blue Phase Snow Geese and Ross' Geese) – Sept. 27 – Jan. 11, 2004

**Light Geese Spring Conservation Order** (White and Blue Phase Snow Geese and Ross' Geese) – Jan. 12, 2004 – April 15, 2004. Additional regulations may apply.

**Woodcock** – Oct. 4 – Nov. 17

**Snipe** – Sept. 6 – Nov. 30

**Rail** (Sora and Virginia) – Sept. 6 – Nov. 14

**Special September Canada Goose Season** – Sept. 1 – 15 – Only in designated zones around Des Moines and Cedar Rapids-Iowa City. For zone maps, go to [www.iowadnr.com/wildlife](http://www.iowadnr.com/wildlife).

### **Waterfowl daily bag and possession limits**

The possession limit is twice the daily bag limit for all species except light geese for which there is no possession limit.

**Ducks** – Daily limit is 6, including no more than 4 mallards (of which no more than 2 may be female), 2 wood ducks, 2 redheads, 1 pintail, 1 canvasback, 1 black duck, 3 mottled ducks and 3 scaup.

**Mergansers** – Daily limit is 5, including no more than 1 hooded merganser.

**Coots** – Daily limit is 15.

**Geese** – Daily limit for Canada geese is 2. For other geese, the daily limit is 2 white-fronted, 2 brant and 20 aggregate light geese – both white and blue phase snow geese and Ross' geese.

**Woodcock** – Daily limit is 3

**Snipe** – Daily limit is 8

**Rail** (Sora and Virginia) – Daily limit is 12

### **Trapping Seasons**

There are no daily bag or possession limits. The seasons open on 8 a.m. on the opening day.

**Mink, Muskrat, Raccoon, Weasel, Striped Skunk, Badger, Opossum, Fox** (Red and Gray) **and Coyote** – Nov. 1 – Jan. 31, 2004. Selected areas may be established in February for muskrat trapping only.

**Beaver** – Nov. 1 – April 15, 2004

**Civet Cat** (Spotted Skunk), **Bobcat and Otter** – Continuous Closed Season

**Groundhog** – Jun 15 – Oct. 31

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## **HOT WEATHER? FISH A POND!**

By Joe Wilkinson

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Another cast. Another fish. The mottled black and white pattern signaled another crappie, as Tom Monroe pulled it alongside the boat. Like most of the others, it was 10 inches long...and thick. Separating his green and silver spinner from its mouth, Monroe

dropped the crappie back into the wooded pond. About that time, fishing partner Bob Howard snapped his pole back. One more on.

Even I pulled in three or four crappies, along with a few small bass and bluegills. It wasn't nonstop *all* morning. But it wasn't far from it. Three or four times, we notched a 'double'; one fish being reeled in as another hit on a different line. Once, Howard's crappie nearly bumped Monroe's as they reeled in fish from opposite ends of the small trolling-motor powered boat. For Howard, it was his last fishing trip until 'ice up'. Fishing season ends when football begins and his Sigourney-Keota Cobras were ready to begin practice.

Monroe had predicted the crappie onslaught yesterday, as we bounced and bumped through the farm field that dropped down to the less-than-an-acre pond near Sigourney. "Some of them are not quite 10 or 11 inches. Some are a little bigger," he noted. "Crappies are notorious for schooling in year classes. There will be a real tremendous year class and then a couple years later, another year class will come along. These are big enough that they're fun to catch."

Big enough that *most* anglers would be filling a bucket for the trip home. Monroe and Howard, though, fish for the catch. Everything goes back. For Monroe, fishing is just part of his hobby. He also manages about 20 private farm ponds around Keokuk County, advising owners on what to stock...what to keep and what to leave. "It's very critical to keep a balance in there," underscores Monroe. With his job running a farm supply store in Sigourney, coupled with a fish and wildlife management degree, farmers tend to trust him. "Ponds are smaller. We have gone to a pond where, for instance, we know there are—say—ten big bass in it. We can catch all ten in an afternoon. If somebody came in and took them out, then the pond is ruined."

That's because those predator fish are 'quality control' in the finite boundaries of a pond. If they don't consume vast quantities of small bluegills and other fish, the resulting population boom would outstrip its food source; the zooplankton, insects and the smaller forage fish at the lower end of the food chain. As a result, fish growth would be stunted. It could take two or three years for more big bass to grow back. "You have to be careful; it's too easy to take out those big predator fish," warns Monroe.

Instead of packing out a couple 2-pound largemouths each trip, they catch and release 4 to 6-pound bass, with an occasional 8-pound...yes, *8 pound*...hawg. Likewise, by returning those nice-sized crappies, they know that each trip to the pond might mean a hook-to-face meeting with a monster.

Howard had just such an encounter at the next pond. "There won't be as many crappies, but they will be bigger. The bluegills, too," promised Monroe, surveying the four acre pond; cattails across the dam, trees crowding most of the rest of it. The first hour produced several saucer-sized bluegills, even though we were trolling for crappies. "This will go 1-pound," noted Monroe, trying to cover the 'gill with his outstretched hand. It didn't quite make it. Not bad, for an incidental catch. There were a few nice

crappies, but nothing breathtaking. We did wide-eye a 13-incher, as it spit out the hook and swam under the boat.

Still, no monsters. Until Howard's rod tip bent. Hard. As he coaxed the fish alongside the boat, the water exploded. It was a crappie. It was huge. And then it was gone. I couldn't quite make out what the Old Coach muttered, but it wasn't 'goodbye'. Not a man prone to exaggeration, Howard held his hands a foot and a half apart, describing his glimpse of the prize.

It will be ice fishing season, though, before Howard and Super Crappie square off again.

### **Sidebar: Good Watershed Makes the Pond**

Don't walk into any Iowa farm pond and expect to pull out a lunker. Good pond management yields good fishing. And that includes the watershed around it. "Most of the ponds we fish have good watershed protection," explains Tom Monroe of Sigourney, who manages about 20 farm ponds around Sigourney. CRP and set-aside ground are common, on the slopes above the ponds we fish. That severely reduces soil erosion; improving the water quality...and the fishing. "The lowest rung of the food chain; the little insects, the invertebrates, they have to have it to proliferate," stresses Monroe. "The little fish eat them and do well and the big fish eat them. It's all related. The better the water quality, the better your pond fishing success."

The second factor he considers is depth. "Are fish going to survive over the winter," asks Monroe, noting that eight feet is a minimum depth to weather extra-cold weather. "If the fish are going to die out occasionally (and have to be restocked) they don't get big enough to interest us. I also like a pond with weed growth. That's part of the food chain. I think (introduced) grass carp that eat vegetation negatively affect the food chain. It definitely affects fishing."

And in the summer, of course, time of day and conditions dictate whether you'll catch many fish. "The second pond had bigger fish; bigger crappies, but we were here later in the day," points out Bob Howard, Monroe's fishing partner. "They seemed to be feeding right when we got here, and then they kind of went into the midday swoon. There is a time of day difference in feeding cycles. It also varies pond to pond, too. (Even things like) wind action, and where it has the fish feeding."

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## **COUNTING IOWA'S TREES**



If you have ever wondered if anyone is keeping track of how many trees are in Iowa's forests, the answer is yes. And, this includes keeping track of how large Iowa's trees are, how healthy they are, and how many acres of forested land exist in our state.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) bureau of forestry and the U.S. Forest Service constantly monitor Iowa's forestlands. Sample plots are strategically placed in Iowa forests and measured by U.S. Forest Service and DNR crews each year in a process called Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA). The FIA data is reported in a technical brochure each year.

The latest FIA brochure shows an increase in the acreage of Iowa forested land. In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Iowa had 6 million acres of forest, which had dwindled to 1.5 million acres during certain periods of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but has rebounded to 2.6 million acres. Iowa's forestry bureau programs for reforestation and forest care, and the farm programs are helping forests rebound. There is still a lot to do, but gains are being made and lands marginal for agriculture, and certain riparian lands are steadily being converted back to native forest.

Also good news is that the average tree in Iowa forests is getting larger, of higher wood quality, and generally healthier. Iowa forests are maturing, and forestland owners are practicing stewardship more than ever, protecting forests and steadily ridding them of remnant cull trees.

Data from Iowa's FIA plots also point out items needing attention. A forest disease known as White Oak Decline is becoming more noticeable in northeast Iowa. This disease causes scattered individual white oak trees to gradually die, and remain "standing dead" for several years. Forest pathologists are tracking this disease and seeking answers about exact causes.

Invasive, nonnative species is another area of concern. Gypsy Moth, a European insect is moving westward toward Iowa now, and will become a factor because the caterpillars feed on tree leaves. Nonnative, old-world plant species of garlic mustard, honeysuckle, and buckthorn are showing up in Iowa woodlands. The DNR and other agencies and conservation groups are confronting these invasive species with several new programs.

Interesting facts about Iowa forests abound in the FIA reports.

- 97-percent of Iowa forests are hardwood forests with only a small percentage of pine forests.
- Iowa forests contain an estimated 900 million trees, one inch or larger in bole diameter.
- Iowa forests are sustainable, i.e. more wood grows each year than is harvested each year. In the growth progression from sapling size to pole size to saw log size, the biggest increase is in pole size and, as this growth bulge moves into the saw log size, our forests could remain sustainable even if harvesting increased.

- On average, the biggest trees in Iowa forests are cottonwood trees.
- On average, trees having the highest per tree value in Iowa are walnut trees.
- 9-percent of Iowa forestland is now owned by government (federal, state, county or local).
- Iowa forests contain 98 million dry tons of biomass. Bio-fuels, and bio industry are receiving much more research now, and future FIA sampling will include more measurements of biomass.

Forests are important to Iowans. Healthy forests serve as critical wildlife habitat, ensure clean water, and are preferred places to hike and camp. Owning and managing forested land is viewed by many Iowans as a good investment. Wood from Iowa forests supports a large and economically important industry. "Counting Iowa's Trees" via the FIA process assists in preserving all these important forest values.

To view the complete FIA brochure "Iowa's Forest Resources in 2001:  
<http://ncrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/viewpub.asp?key=1849> .

For more information, contact John Walkowiak, chief of the DNRs forestry bureau, at 515-241-5966.

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## ***IOWA FISHING REPORT***

**For the week of August 19, 2003**

**www.iowadnr.com**

**The Iowa Fishing Report is released every other week from August into the fall. For current information on fishing conditions for your lake or area, contact the office in that district. Phone numbers are listed with each district report.**

### **Northeast**

**Mississippi River Pools 9 – 15:** Good fishing continues on the Mississippi River as water levels remain low and steady. Water temperature is 84 degrees and water clarity is good. Be careful navigating on the Mississippi right now, as water levels are very low. White bass, channel catfish, freshwater drum, largemouth and smallmouth bass are all being caught in good numbers along with several other species. White bass are starting to school up now and action can be very fast in **Pools 9-11**. White bass are being reported from tailwater areas near **Lock and Dam 9 and 10** and some are also being caught on the wing dams. Try fishing the rocky points in **Pool 14** near Clinton for white bass. Watch for schools feeding on minnows. If you see areas where minnows are continuously being chased, try to maintain some distance from the melee to avoid spooking the white bass. Any lure with some flash, such as a spoon or a spinner, will work. Make long casts into the areas where the minnows have been breaking the water.

Catfishing in **Pools 9-15** has been good, but the fish have been generally small. Try using stink bait, prepared cheese bait or night crawlers for best action. Catfishing is generally done in current areas along the main channel or larger side channels. Anchor above fallen trees, root wads and wing dams. By staying above the trees and luring the catfish out, you can avoid snagging up as often. Good catfish locations are Minnesota Slough, Big Slough and Winneshiek Slough in Pool 9; Harpers Slough, McDonald Slough and State Line Slough in Pool 10; and Cassville Slough, Picayune Chute, Jack Oak Slough, and Hurricane Chute in Pool 11. In Pools 12-15, try the wing dams and sloughs with current for channel catfish. Freshwater drum (sheepshead) are being caught in good numbers in most areas with current in **Pools 12-15**. Drum can be caught using a sliding egg sinker and a hook baited with night crawlers fished along wing dams and side channels. If you plan to clean drum, store the freshly caught fish on ice until you fillet them. This will keep the meat firm. In addition, cut the red meat away from the rest of the fillet. If you take these two simple steps, drum are excellent eating. Largemouth bass fishing has been excellent in **Pools 9-11**. These fish are being caught on a variety of lures, but the traditional tube jigs and spinner baits are working best. Largemouth bass are generally found in backwater lakes on the Mississippi. With the low water levels, these fish move out into current areas. Look for largemouth to hang out near the openings of large backwater complexes or in adjacent flowing sloughs. Some are even being caught on rock wing dams. Big Slough, Winneshiek Slough and DeSoto Bay near Lansing are hot in **Pool 9**. In **Pool 10**, McGregor Lake and the lakes near Wyalusing Slough have been excellent and Cassville Slough and Bertom Lake in **Pool 11** have produced well in recent weeks. Smallmouth bass are also being caught in excellent numbers in **Pools 9-11**. Smallmouth are found in swift current areas with rock. These areas are generally associated with the main channel habitats, including bank stabilization rock, day markers or wing dam habitats. Spinners and crankbaits are the lure of choice for these feisty fish. Using top-water lures, such as floating crank baits, torpedoes or even bug imitation lures also can be effective for smallies. Walleye fishing has been fair on the wing dams and flats in **Pools 12-15** using jigs and 3-ways tipped with a night crawler.

The rivers and ponds in northeast Iowa are heating up due to warm weather and a lack of recent rains. Fishing pressure and fishing success have both dropped. When you do go out to enjoy a day of fishing, we recommend that you head for the deeper pools where fish go to hide from the rising water temperatures and concentrate your fishing hours to the cooler early morning and late evening hours for best success.

**Turkey River** (Howard, Winneshiek and Fayette): The river is currently experiencing an algae bloom which has interfered with fishing success.

**Cedar River** (Floyd): Channel catfishing is good on cut baits and prepared stink bait. Walleye and smallmouth bass are biting on night crawlers and crankbaits. A few northern pike are being picked up. A few crappies are also being caught in the early morning and late evening hours.

**Cedar** (Black Hawk and Bremer), **West Fork Cedar** (Butler, Bremer and Black Hawk), **Shell Rock** (Butler), and **Wapsipinicon rivers** (Buchanan): Channel catfish are good on stink baits, dead chubs, night crawlers, crayfish and chicken liver.

**Maquoketa River** (Delaware): Walleye fishing is fair to good on crankbaits and jigs below the Delhi Dam.

**Lake Meyer** (Winneshie): A few bluegill and crappie are being caught in the early morning and late evening hours. The action is slow.

**Trout** fishing and stream conditions are excellent! For current trout stocking information, contact the Big Spring Hatchery at 563-245-1699, Decorah Hatchery at 563-382-3315 or Manchester Hatchery at 563-927-5736. You can also view the trout stocking calendar on-line by going to [www.iowadnr.com](http://www.iowadnr.com), clicking on **Fish and Fishing** and then choosing **Favorite Pages**.

**For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.**

### **Northwest**

**Spirit Lake** (Dickinson): Walleyes are being caught throughout the lake, but most fish are below the 14-inch minimum length limit. Anglers are drifting or trolling with live bait harnesses tipped with either leeches or night crawlers. Yellow perch fishing has slowed. Anglers are catching 8 to 10-inch yellow perch in 18 to 20-feet of water using wigglers and ice fishing type lures. The best places to fish are Templar and Marble Beach.

**West Okoboji** (Dickinson): Anglers are catching bluegills using a leech under a bobber in 15 to 20-feet of water. Echo Bay, Hayward's Bay and Sandpiper Cover are good locations. Some smallmouth bass are biting on leeches in Echo Bay and Hayward's Bay. Anglers are catching walleyes along the weed lines on leeches under a bobber or crankbaits, and on leeches in Echo Bay and Hayward's Bay. Yellow perch are being caught trolling a jig and wiggler in deeper water in Echo Bay and Hayward's Bay.

**East Okoboji** (Dickinson): Channel catfish are biting at the north end using stink bait or crawdads. Anglers are catching some nice numbers of legal sized walleyes. Troll spinners and night crawlers off the weed lines when there is a good chop on the water. Troll crankbaits for bottom hugging fish. Crappies and bluegills are being caught at the north end on small jigs tipped with wigglers. Anglers are picking up some yellow perch at the north end of the lake.

**Little Sioux River** (Dickinson and Clay): Nice numbers of channel catfish are being caught on dip baits or night crawlers. Fresh cut bait or sour clams will produce larger catfish, especially after dark.

**Lake Pahoja** (Lyon): Channel catfish continue to be good using chicken liver around the brush piles. Crappie and bluegill fishing is good throughout the lake using a small piece of night crawler or wax worm. The fish are on the small side.

**Willow Creek** (Osceola): Bass are good using top water lures.

**Dog Creek** (O'Brien): Fishing is good for panfish and channel catfish, especially in the early morning and evening hours.

**Clear Lake** (Cerro Gordo): Yellow bass fishing is excellent. Anglers are catching yellow bass around the rock reefs, drifting the north shore and off some of the public docks. Use minnows and cut bait for the best action. Try different spots until locating a school. Channel catfish are good using chicken liver, stink bait and chubs. The rush beds in the west end, rock reefs and wind blown shorelines are the best spots. Walleye fishing remains slow. A few walleyes are hitting crankbaits. Anglers fishing yellow bass are catching an occasional walleye.

**Little Wall Lake** (Hamilton): Channel catfish are biting on stink bait and chicken liver. Bluegills are hitting small jigs and pieces of night crawler. Largemouth bass are hitting spinner baits.

**Boone River** (Hamilton): Channel catfish are biting on stink bait and chicken liver.

**Briggs Woods Lake** (Hamilton): Channel catfish are biting on chicken liver and stink bait.

**Black Hawk Lake** (Sac): Channel catfish are biting on chicken liver.

**Storm Lake** (Buena Vista): Channel catfish, in the 2 to 3-pound range, are biting on dead shad.

**Brushy Creek** (Webster): Anglers are catching bass in 10 to 20-feet of water on a variety of lures. A few walleyes are being caught in the evening. Sunfish are almost everywhere. Use a small hook and worm. The sunfish are on the small side.

**For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.**

### **Southwest**

**Green Valley** (Union): Fishing is good for crappies suspended in deeper water in early and late hours of the day. Channel catfish fishing is good using liver, night crawlers or cut baits.

**Fogle Lake** (Ringgold): Channel catfish can be caught using night crawlers or liver suspended off the steep points.

**Three Mile** (Union): Walleyes are good using night crawlers or crankbaits on roadbed and main deeper points in 5 to 12 feet of water. Channel catfish are still being caught on night crawlers or cut bait off the rocks and around the fish cleaning station. Largemouth bass fishing is good throughout the lake. Bluegills are being caught on the outside of the weed lines or on the tops of the fish mounds on night crawlers and wax worms. Crappies can be caught drift fishing deeper water or over the top of the brush piles.

**Twelve Mile** (Union): Channel catfish fishing is still good on cut bait and liver. Walleye fishing is good using leaches on the deeper points.

**Little River** (Decatur): Channel catfish fishing is best using cut bait and liver in the bays. Some crappies can be caught drift fishing open water.

**Icaria** (Adams): One to 4-pound channel catfish are still being caught everywhere using cut bait and liver.

**Viking** (Montgomery): Crappie fishing is fair using tube jigs tipped with a minnow or minnows suspended from a bobber around brush piles, or suspended in 8 to 10-feet of water. Catfish fishing has been good on liver. Bluegills are fair with jigs and night crawlers.

**Cold Springs** (Cass): Catfish are being caught on liver and prepared baits, especially toward evening.

**Manawa** (Pottawattamie): Channel catfish are excellent using liver or prepared baits.

**Greenfield** (Adair): Fishing is good to excellent for channel catfish in the early morning and evening hours using liver.

**Orient** (Adair): Channel catfish are good using prepared stink bait or cut fish. Largemouth bass fishing is fair.

**Nodaway** (Adair): Fishing is good to excellent for channel catfish in the early morning and evening hours using liver.

**Morman Trail** (Adair): Channel catfish are good in the early morning and evening hours using liver. Largemouth bass fishing is fair.

**Prairie Rose** (Shelby): Fishing is fair for 8-inch crappies on jigs/minnows around brush piles. Channel catfish are good on liver or prepared baits. Largemouth bass fishing is good.

**Big Creek Lake** (Polk): Channel catfish fishing has been good to excellent using cut and stink baits. Bluegill fishing has been good using pieces of worm on 1/32-ounce jigs and slip bobbers.

**Beaver Lake** (Dallas): Bluegill fishing is fair, with the best areas around the woody structure along the shorelines. Channel catfish fishing has been good, primarily early and late using stink baits and liver.

**Don Williams** (Boone): Channel catfish fishing is good using chicken liver and night crawlers. Crappie fishing is fair using minnows.

**Lake Ahquabi** (Warren): Channel catfish fishing has been good early and late using stink bait and chicken liver. Bluegill fishing has been fair using night crawlers or wax worms. Largemouth bass – primarily sub-legal size fish– are being caught on crankbaits.

**Hooper Lake** (Warren): Channel catfish fishing has been good early and late using stink bait and chicken liver. Bluegills have been caught using traditional baits and lures. Largemouth bass fishing is fair using crankbaits, although as in Lake Ahquabi, most fish are sub-legal.

**Rock Creek** (Jasper): Channel catfish fishing has been good using night crawlers. Crappie fishing has been fair for boat anglers in deeper water using jigs and minnows.

**Easter Lake** (Polk): Channel catfish fishing is good, with the majority of fish caught using stink bait. Crappie fishing has slowed, with some fish caught using jigs and minnows and/or worms.

**Hickory Grove Lake** (Story): Channel catfish fishing is good on stink bait. Bluegill fishing is fair using small hooks and tipped with worms. Largemouth bass fishing has been fair with most anglers using top-water lures.

**Saylorville Lake** (Polk): Walleye fishing is fair using crankbaits and shad raps. Channel catfish fishing has picked up using traditional baits such as stink bait, cut bait and night crawlers. **Tailwater:** White bass and walleye fishing has been fair using leadheads and twister tails. Channel catfish have been caught using traditional baits.

**Lake Red Rock** (Marion): White bass/wipers fishing has been fair using rattler type lures. Channel catfish fishing has been good along shorelines using stink bait, cut bait and night crawlers. A few anglers have been very successful crappie fishing in the larger coves. **Tailwater:** The fishery in the tailwater has slowed, although white bass/wipers and channel catfish fishing have been reported caught.

**For more information on fishing in southwest Iowa, call the regional office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.**

## **Southeast**

**Lake Darling** (Washington): Catfishing remains good especially along the campground arm of the lake. Stink baits and chicken liver seems to be what is bringing them up. The best time seems to be right at dusk until the park closes at 10:30 p.m.

**Lake Odessa** (Louisa): Water levels are at their summer levels for growing vegetation for the fall waterfowl migration. The contractor working on the levee will be down at the Toolesboro road late this week or early next week so that road will be closed off and on. The contractor will try to keep the road open on the weekends.

**Lake Geode** (Henry): The bluegills and bass are tired of it being the dog days and are on the feed in the late evenings towards sun down. Fish for them along the ledges where the shallow water quickly becomes deep. Construction work is still going on in the park. The boat ramp by the beach is closed as they make it more user friendly.

**Lake Rathbun** (Appanoose): Crappies have been biting on small jigs fished in 25 to 30-feet of water. Channel catfish have been hitting on night crawlers and stink baits.

**Lake Sugema** (Van Buren): Bluegills have been hitting on small jigs fished in the deeper water areas. Largemouth bass have been the most active in the early mornings and evenings.

**Lake Miami** (Monroe): Bluegills have been hitting on small jigs. Channel catfish have been biting on stink bait and liver.

**Lake Wapello** (Davis): Largemouth bass have been hitting in the early morning and late evenings. Bluegills are hitting small jigs on the outer edge of the weed line. Channel catfish have been biting on night crawlers.

**Coralville Reservoir** (Johnson): Catfishing has been slow. Crappie fishing is picking up a little with a few crappies being caught off of deeper brush piles and drop-off's around the rock walls.

**Lake Macbride** (Johnson): Crappie fishing has been fair to good for 9-inch fish with a few larger fish available. Fish can be difficult to locate; try fishing around deeper brush piles using jigs and minnows and slip bobber rigs.

**Pleasant Creek** (Linn): Bluegill fishing has been good on jigs tipped with worms in deeper open water along weed edges. Bass fishing has been slow during the day. Anglers have had some success catching bass and white bass during the early morning and evening hours.

**Wapsipinicon River** (Jones): Walleye and smallmouth bass have been biting well on various live bait rigs and artificial baits at Central City and Anamosa.

**Skunk River** (Washington and Henry): The river is down to its normal summer lows; getting a boat up and down the river will be difficult. Fishing has been spotty.

**Iowa River** (Johnson): Catfishing has been slow; a few fish have been caught on dip baits. White bass fishing has been fair below the Burlington Street Dam.

**Iowa River** (Louisa): The river is a little lower than normal for this time of year but it is still navigable with some caution. Catfishing is fair in the very early morning and late evening.

**For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.**

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